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The 'primary entelechy' that natural science allows us to assume hypothetically, and epistemology allows us to refer by analogy to absoluteness, remains far behind any conception of a perfect absolute Being that man is able to form in his mind. But it does *not* contradict the concept of God as formed by the reasoning imagination.

Negative and fragmentary as many of the conclusions are, concerning the problems of intense human significance, yet they not only give our ideas concerning the existence of God, and the origin and end of life, a freer scope, but they suggest new truths which may well inspire literature worthy of such great themes. The book is one which no writer on these subjects can in future afford to ignore.

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ÆSTHETIC AS SCIENCE OF EXPRESSION AND GENERAL LINGUISTIC.

Translated from the Italian of Benedetto Croce, by Douglas Ainslie. London: Macmillan & Co., 1909. Pp. xxxi, 403.

This is an ingenious, an attractive, but on the whole a disappointing book. The treatment has the defects as well as the merits shown by so many Latin thinkers, boldness and system, but also narrowness and delusive clearness. Not that Croce's leading formula is without value, only it does not seem to be adequate, nor always to mean the same thing. Stated in general terms, it asserts that the fundamental æsthetic fact is 'an intuition,' so clearly grasped that he who has it can express it. An intuition that cannot be expressed is not really complete, not really mastered. Thus we may say indifferently that Art is Intuition, or that Art is Expression. So far so good, but what does Croce mean by *intuition*?

At the beginning of his treatise (pp. 20ff.) he explains that he does not mean a peculiar kind of intuition, intuition plus something distinctive, but just intuition pure and simple. Now if he means *any* direct perception not reached by inference, then it would be hard to deny that " $1 + 1 = 2$ " was an intuition. On this view language, considered as an expression of intuitions, would be part of æsthetic, and sometimes Croce (as the sub-title indicates) says this in so many words, and indeed asserts it of *all* language whatsoever (*e. g.*, pp. 39ff.). But from what he says elsewhere about the essential connection of the æsthetic

fact with 'the individual' and 'the concrete' (*e. g.*, p. 46, p. 96, p. 388), it appears that he is really limiting 'intuition' to: (a) the direct consciousness that something is presented to sense, *e. g.*, "I hear this sound," or (b) the consciousness in the mind of something so fully concrete in its characteristics that it only needs a physical basis to become present to sense, *e. g.*, the sonata in Beethoven's head, which only needs the piano and the player to become audible. (a) is distinguished from (b) by including "the apprehension of something as *real*" (p. 5), and this distinction is secondary. The common element, apart from this, is 'intuition,' and such intuition is the primary fact of consciousness.

The first criticism that suggests itself here is that although intuition in this sense may be a primary element in consciousness, yet without some further element of abstraction, inference, and generalization, these 'intuitions' would be inchoate and blind. But the next criticism and the more important one for æsthetics, would be this: that between the intuition "this sound is present" (or the intuition "I am thinking of this sound") and the intuition "this sound is *beautiful*," there is a genuine difference,—a difference such that the last cannot be deduced from either of the former. With great boldness Croce does try to make the deduction; according to him beauty merely consists in the adequate expression of the intuition in the artist's mind.

With equal boldness he denies the existence of any beauty in nature at all, or the existence of the ugly except as indicating the struggle, not yet completed, to attain clearness of vision. Croce certainly has the courage of his opinions. It is also in perfect coherence with his formula that he puts all art upon the same level in so far as it attains clearness of expression. Art being nothing *but* expression, the things expressed have in themselves no artistic value whatsoever (pp. 129, 130). The connection of art with morality resides for him simply in this: that as regards practical life and action, it may be a question what intuitions we should communicate and what we should withhold, because of their indirect results. It does not occur to him to ask whether the intuitions in themselves have any degrees of value, other than 'æsthetic' in his meaning of the word. They all have value, he would appear to hold, as activities of the spirit, but not further. The idea that art could be a revelation of something in some sense external to man is entirely set aside.

Yet it is exactly the combination of the search for 'the true' and the search for 'the beautiful' in art that seems to contribute its unique importance.

In a lecture on "Pure Intuition and the Lyrical Character of Art," printed here as an appendix, Croce gives a different turn to his theory by including *feeling* in the necessary artistic intuition. He seems induced to make this step by realizing that his formula, so far as stated in the treatise, would put the photographic vision of the 'Derby Day' on a level with a drawing by Botticelli; but he justifies the step by a most curious argument. The artistic intuition must have no element of inference or generalization in it; "it must be pure of every abstraction, of every conceptual element" (p. 394). "This means that the content of the pure intuition cannot be either an abstract concept, or a speculative concept or idea, or a conceptualized . . . representation." The critic can hardly fail to remark here that, if this is so, the pure intuition would appear to have no definite content at all. Croce sees this, and to fill the gap draws on the remaining 'psychic content.' "Pure intuition, then, since it does not produce concepts, must represent the will in its manifestations, that is to say, it can represent nothing but *states of the soul*."

But whatever we may think of this argument, the conclusion is interesting, for it involves the view that behind all beauty there must lie an emotional experience. For those who accept the existence of natural beauty this opens a vista of speculation. One of the best things in the book, indeed, is the stress laid on the activity of the spirit necessary either for the creation or the enjoyment of beauty. See, for example, an admirable passage on page 199. There is a summary, by the translator, of Croce's "History of *Æsthetic*," a work which shows an amazing range of reading.

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